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THE DEFECTOR'S STORY

He Is the Highest-Ranking Intelligence Officer from a Soviet-Bloc Country to Defect to the West. He Paints Rumanian President Nicolae Ceausescu as Napoleonic in His Obsessions. His Defection Led to Purges in His Homeland and to the Recall of Rumania's Ambassador to the United States. He Suggests That Everyone Is Corruptible. For the First Time, He Tells His Story.

BY ION MIHAI PACEPA

When Ion Mihai Pacepa arrived at Andrews Air Force Base on July 28, 1978, aboard a US military aircraft that had taken off in West Germany, he was described by State Department spokesmen and newspaper reports as a "high-ranking aide" to Rumanian president Nicolae Ceausescu.

In fact, Pacepa, who quickly was granted political asylum by the United States, had been personal adviser to Ceausescu and deputy director of the Department of Foreign Intelligence—called DIE from its Rumanian name, Departamentul de Informatii Externe. He is the highest-ranking Soviet-bloc intelligence officer ever to defect to the West.

Within months of Pacepa's defection, the Rumanian ambassadors to the United States and the United Nations were replaced. In a November 19, 1978, report on Rumania, Michael Dobbs of the Washington Post wrote that the Pacepa affair "has contributed to the most thorough purge of ranking Communist-party and government officials since Ceausescu came to power thirteen years ago."

Educated as an engineer at the Polytechnical Institute in Bucharest, Pacepa entered the Rumanian intelligence service in 1951, when he was 23 years old. By the time of his defection he had been a frequent visitor to the United States.

Pacepa made advance arrangements for President Ceausescu's official trips to visit President Richard Nixon in 1973, President Gerald Ford in 1975, and President Jimmy Carter in 1978. He then accompanied the Rumanian president and his wife, Elena, on all three of the White House visits. During these state visits, Pacepa not only arranged discussions with American Presidents but even provided a food taster for the security-obsessed Ceausescu. Pacepa also arranged for special Rumanian intelligence teams to electronically sweep Ceausescu's quarters in the US for listening devices, including rooms at Blair House.

Pacepa, whose father worked in Rumania for General Motors before World War II, is now 57 years old and living under a new identity in the US. His daughter, Dana, an artist, remains in Rumania with her husband and family. Despite making repeated attempts, Pacepa has had no contact with her since he called her from West Germany in 1978, just before his defection. An "open letter" sent to her last year through a Paris newspaper—and repeated time and again over Radio Free Europe—ended:

"There is a picture on my desk. I took it on a sunny day, of you eating an apple. Bite the apple again, my daughter, for

infinitely more sunny days. I love you incredibly much, my Dana."

Pacepa is at work on a book about life at the top in the Communist world and about what he calls "the first Communist dynasty"—Nicolae Ceausescu and his family. These excerpts from the book manuscript represent the first time Pacepa has told his story for publication.

HEADS OF STATE

BLAIR HOUSE: THE LADY WASN'T IMPRESSED

Rumanian president Nicolae Ceausescu and his wife, Elena, arrived in Washington on April 11, 1978, for a state visit with Jimmy Carter. Ceausescu has not returned to the United States since.

The presidential Boeing 707 landed at Andrews Air Force Base at 6 PM. A few minutes later Evan Dobelle, the US chief of protocol, came on board the plane and invited the Rumanian guests onto American soil. At the plane's steps, Nicolae Ceausescu and his wife, Elena, were greeted by Secretary of State Cyrus Vance and his wife, Grace, as well as by other American and Rumanian repre-